

BODY & SOUL

The Truth About Fasting – Part II

First, let me put your mind at ease. Most people can be skeptical about fasting because they think of it as starvation or that their bodies are going to go into starvation mode and ruin their metabolism. I thought the same thing before I did the research. But interestingly enough, eating 5-7 times each day is relatively new and has only advanced as the obesity rate has gone up.

So just to be clear, I want to differentiate between starving ourselves and fasting. “Starvation is the involuntary absence of food. It is neither deliberate nor controlled. Starving people have no idea when and where their next meal will come from. Fasting, on the other hand, is the voluntary withholding of food for spiritual, health, or other reasons. It is the difference between suicide and dying of old age.”¹ I am not advocating for extreme dieting, weight loss, or eating disorders. I am simply presenting you with the research.

Obesity and Diabetes

Over the last 20-30 years, obesity has become a pandemic. “At least 2.8 million people die each year as a result of being overweight or obese and the prevalence of obesity has tripled from 1975 to 2016.”² Diabetes can be a huge part of the obesity pandemic. The real frustration is, both diabetes



and obesity are almost always preventable. Insulin insensitivity is the main cause of type 2 diabetes which is closely linked to obesity. When we eat, our bodies secrete a hormone called insulin that allows those nutrients, especially sugars, to get into our cells for energy use or storage. When we are constantly eating we have elevated levels of insulin. Our body eventually loses sensitivity to insulin causing our blood sugar levels to be out of whack. “Fasting is the most efficient and consistent strategy to decrease insulin levels.”³ “Contrary to popular belief, all foods raise insulin.”³ Obviously, carbs raise insulin levels much higher, but the best answer to fixing our insulin problems is to not raise insulin at all. Hence fasting. “Regular fasting, in addition to lowering insulin levels, has also been shown to improve insulin sensitivity significantly. Most diets reduce highly insulin-secreting foods but do not address the insulin resistance issue.”³

There is a state that our body goes into when we eat, called the “fed state.” Once we have digested all of the food, the energy is either used or put into storage for later; our body then goes into the “fasted state” after several hours which means our body has to start using the storages for fuel.

Let’s say that I made a delicious, juicy steak last night to eat for lunch today that is readily available to me in my fridge. How much sense would it make for me to go to the store, buy another steak, come back home, trim, marinate, cook and then eat the steak when I already have one readily available to me in my house? It is the same for our bodies. When we eat, our body digests and absorbs the nutrients into our blood so they can be dispersed to where our body needs them most. Our bodies use up those storages primarily when we are in the fasted state. So when you eat every couple of hours, this causes us to always have glucose readily available and therefore our bodies become efficient at storing fat, but not burning fat.

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FAITH @ WORK

STEPS to Finding Common Ground in a Polarized World

Our nation is polarized on many important issues, including race relations. The best way to resolve gridlocks is to find common ground. Common ground is the cornerstone to resolving human conflicts. More than simply a compromise, it is a new area of shared interest discovered through a collaborative common ground-seeking process, generating a vision that is greater than any of our own.

How do we find common ground?

I have co-founded the 501c(3) non-profit organization the Common Ground Network with Dr. Rice Brooks, and we have formulated a methodology called STEPS to help people find common ground with others: Start, Trade Places, Empathy, Partnership, and Seek common ground.

Start: What motivates me to find common ground, and why do I care about doing so?

Trade places: Look at an issue from my opponent’s perspective and speak in the language of the listener. As Jonathan Haidt pointed out in his book, *The Righteous Mind*, we all have an innate biased value system and blind spots that cause us to see the world through tinted glasses.

Empathy: Understand and share the feelings of others. The SALT principle, advocated by Dr. Brooks, is very useful: Start a conversation, Ask a question, Listen, and then Talk. We need to have a civil and respectful dialog by separating position from person, policy from value, and be willing to examine the basis and validity of our own narrative by asking ourselves, “Is there a chance I could be wrong?” And if so, “Why do I think I might be wrong?”

Partnership: Have a partner who shares my passion and works together with me.

Seek common ground: This is the final, call-for-action step which includes: Have the vision, see the need, take the lead, face the facts and don’t lose heart. Even if we can only find a small amount of common ground, it still could have a significant and transformative effect overall.

These five common ground-seeking STEPS have been inspired by the life of Christ Himself, who truly exemplified these principles. They will enable



us to build bridges, break down barriers, understand each other better, and be closer to the truth. We all have limited life experience, and therefore limited viewpoints. When we meet someone who has a different life experience, we will learn new things. In fact, we learn the most when we communicate with people who have views opposite our own!

Through these genuine and productive STEPS of finding common ground, we will not only be able to identify solutions, but also and even more importantly, be inspired to change and become better human beings who are more willing to work together with others.

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